

So You Want To Be A Leader

1 Timothy 3:1-16

MEMORY VERSE

1 TIMOTHY 3:1

This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Enough copies of the curriculum template (included with your lesson) copied onto fancy, certificate type paper and ribbon or yarn.

Masking tape.

Enough 6"x 8" pieces of white poster board as the number of children in your class, markers and scissors.

ATTENTION GETTER!

Greatest in the Kingdom

Use this activity to introduce today's lesson. Sometimes people want to be leaders for the wrong reasons. Some people want to be leaders because they want people to think they are important or others because they like to boss people around. Jesus shared what it took to be the "greatest in His kingdom."

You will need enough curriculum templates for each child in your class. Copy the template onto nice paper to make it look like an award (You may want to white out the line "Curriculum Template" on your master before copying). Roll up the certificates and tie a ribbon or piece of yarn around it. At the beginning of class, pass out the certificates to each child (you can have fun and make it a big presentation if you like). After handing out the certificates have the children open them. Explain that we all would like to be the greatest in the kingdom of God, but there is a list of

qualifications. But they are all scrambled up. Have the children unscramble the words to find out what it takes to be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

The answers to the scrambled words are as follows:

1. Servant
2. Gentle
3. Humble
4. Like Jesus

When done, explain further what it means to be a leader in God's kingdom and go into today's lesson.

LESSON TIME!

This week we're going to look at some good advice that the Apostle Paul gave to Timothy. Timothy was a young man that had become like a son to Paul. Timothy wanted to be like Paul and be a strong leader in the young church. Timothy had loved God since he was a child and had learned about the Scriptures from his mother and grandmother. He was a faithful young man and he listened to all that Paul had taught him. In our lesson today we see that Paul has written him a letter and is telling Timothy how to choose men to help him serve and lead in the church.

Many of you may become leaders in your church as you grow older. What does God lead Paul to write to Timothy about serving and leading in the church? Do any of you want to grow up to be leaders in your church? **God tells us how we can be leaders in His church.**

1 TIMOTHY 3:1-7

This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;

not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;

one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence

(for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);

not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.

Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Paul says right off the bat, “This is a faithful saying”. In other words, here is a saying you can depend on. He goes on to say that if someone desires the position of a bishop that he desires a good work. The first thing we notice is that there is a “desire” associated with being a leader. Many would describe this as a calling. In other words God places the desire on individuals’ hearts to serve Him as a leader in the body. The second thing we see is that leadership in the body of Christ is a “good work”. It is an awesome privilege to be used by God to point others to Jesus.

As we begin to look at leaders in the church we should also understand what Jesus’ heart is towards leaders. He told His disciples (who all became leaders in the early church except Judas) that those who would be greatest in the kingdom of heaven would be the servant of all. So the principle that Jesus gave us is that if we want to be great in God’s kingdom, then we need to be a servant

to everyone else. So a characteristic of a good leader is that they are a servant.

Paul writes out a list of qualifications for an overseer or pastor. This would forever be a grid for people who feel called to serve in this way to compare their lives to in order to see if they line up. It can also show us areas to work on in order to become the leader God wants us to be.

The first item on our list is that a leader should be blameless. In other words non-Christians should not be able to point their fingers at you and blame you for doing something wrong. Our lives need to be above blame from others. Next we see that a pastor should be the husband of one wife. The relationship between a husband and a wife reflects the relationship between Jesus and His church. If the leader is a bad example in his marriage then that will definitely affect his ministry.

A leader should be temperate and sober-minded. In other words, they need to be serious about things. They should not think that everything is just playing around and communicating that the things of the Lord are things that can be taken lightly. They should be serious about their work and do it well, as unto the Lord.

A leader should be hospitable. They need to be willing to open their home up to others, welcoming them in. They also need to be able to teach. A good leaders will be able to read a passage of scripture and then be able to teach and communicate its meaning to others.

Leaders should not be given to wine or violent. They should not drink alcohol or be quick to get angry or get into a fight. They should not be greedy for money. Money should not be the most important thing in their lives. Rather a godly leader should be gentle. They should be the first to jump into an argument with others. And they should not desire what belongs to other people.

A good leader should know how to rule their own home. Their children should be obedient to their parents. Paul talks about how that if a leader cannot rule in their home then how can they rule God's house. Family life is very important for leaders. That is why it is important for leaders to make sure to take care of their families, spend time with them and raise up their children in the ways of the Lord.

A leader also should not be a brand new Christian. They should have some time to learn the scriptures. There is a danger for new Christians to become puffed up and prideful if given too much responsibility too soon. Then finally, leaders need to have a good testimony in the community they live in. People should look at their lives and see an example of Jesus when they interact with others.

Leader Races

Just for a fun game split your children into groups of three. Clear the floor of the classroom. Ask the children if they have ever built a human pyramid before (two children on hands and knees with another child on top). Most of them probably have. Each team of three will be doing that today, but with a slight twist...each pyramid will RACE each other.

Ask the children who would like to be the leader (most will probably raise their hands). Choose two leaders for each team and then explain that they will be the two bottom persons. This will be a good example of being a good leader. They need to be on the bottom and serve others. The third person will be on top of the two leaders. NOTE: Be careful not to have a child that is too heavy on the top, or too light on the bottom.

Have your teams (pyramids) line up. With masking tape, designate a line at the other side of the room and explain that the first team to get past the finish line wins.

1 TIMOTHY 3:8-13

Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money,

holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless.

Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.

Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Next Paul begins to talk about another important job in the church; Paul calls this one “deacons.” Sometimes this word is translated “ministers” or “servant” also. Where elders lead, make decisions and teach; deacon’s minister, serve and oversee the physical aspects of the church. A deacon’s job is very important.

Have you ever wondered who cleans the toilets at church, or who vacuums the carpets? It is the deacons. Who makes sure that everything is in place, all the chairs set out, and everyone ready to go on a Sunday? It is the deacons. We first see deacons in the Bible in Acts chapter 6. There arose a dispute among some of the believers about how food was being distributed in the church. The leaders appointed deacons to take care of those “physical” needs so that the leaders could give themselves to “prayer and study of God’s Word”. In other words the elders were responsible for the

“spiritual” needs while the deacons took care of the “physical” needs.

That does not make one job better than the other. Both are needed in the body of Christ. If we did not have deacons in the church people may come to hear God’s Word, but the whole building may be a mess. God wants His people to be served and cared for in every area.

The requirements for a deacon are very similar to an elder. We see that deacons must be “reverent” or respectful for the things of the Lord. They need to be honest in all they say. They also should not be given over to alcohol or the love of money. They also need to be an example of the believer...in the church and outside of the church.

The need to hold fast the mystery of the faith. In other words, they need to study their Bibles and be ready to defend the faith. They should know the scriptures to encourage others. We also see that deacons need to be proved. They need to be doing the work for a while without any titles to prove that their heart is in the right place.

Their home life needs to be in order, like that of an elder. A deacon should have a good relationship with his wife and should have their home under control.

Then finally Paul shares that there is a special blessing for those who serve as deacons. It is truly a blessing, a privilege and a big responsibility to be a leader in the church. Those of us who are leaders will have to give an account for how we serve Him. Leaders have a great responsibility because they represent the Lord to His people and others. Leaders must be a good representation. **God tells us how we can be leaders in His church.**

1 TIMOTHY 3:14-16

These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly;

but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:

God was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the Spirit,
Seen by angels,
Preached among the Gentiles,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory.

As Paul ends this section of his letter he shares with Timothy that he hopes he will be able to come and visit Timothy. But if something keeps him from coming he wanted to get this information to Timothy so he will know what is right and proper in the church. The church is God's house, the pillar and ground of the truth. These are very important things that Paul is writing and should not be taken lightly. Not by Timothy or by us today.

We need to have a seriousness about the church. It is the place where God meets with His people. His Word is preached and His name is praised. These are not things we can take lightly.

Paul finishes by describing the mystery of godliness, which by the way is declared through His church. We are told that God came in the flesh, was justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on the world, and received up in glory. How we need to continue to declare the truth until He returns.

God sets leaders in His church to encourage His people, to love His people, to serve His people and to teach His people. We need to respect those who God places in areas of leadership. We also need to know that if God places a desire in our hearts to be a leader then we need to take that calling very seriously. And if we are faithful to His call, then He will one day tell us, “Well done good and faithful servant.” That is what we look forward to. **God tells us how we can be leaders in His church.**

It Can Sometimes Be Puzzling

For this craft/activity you will need enough 6”x 8” pieces of white poster board as the number of children in your class, markers and scissors.

Divide your class into pairs. Give each child a piece of poster board and markers. Tell them to draw a picture of what they would like to do when they grow up. But they cannot allow their partner to know what it is, or see the picture. Next have them cut up their picture into puzzle type pieces (approximately 10 pieces that are not too small). Have the children hang on to their puzzles until all of the children are done. Next have each child trade pictures with their partners. Without talking to one another have the children put together the puzzle and guess what their partner would like to do when they grow up. When everyone is done have the children sit down again and get their attention.

Explain that sometimes we know early what God would like for us to do with our lives, other times He reveals His plans to us later. It can sometimes be like a puzzle. But God has a plan for each one of our lives. He has ministries for us in the church and in this world. Let us be open to whatever He might want for us to do. Have the children take their puzzles home with them.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to pray for the leaders in their church. And if they have a desire to be a leader one day to pray for God's wisdom and help to become the leader He wants them to be. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.

This Certificate is awarded to

(name)

for being the

“greatest in the
Kingdom”

For the qualifications of this award,
unscramble the following list of words.

VTASREN _____

EGNELT _____

EMHBUL _____

KIEL SJUSE _____