Godly Leadership

Discussion Guide for Titus 1:5-9

Qualifications for Elders

5 This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— 6 if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. 7 For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Last week we took time in Life Groups to listen to Titus being read aloud. The one theme my group identified through that exercise is leadership.

Leadership is one of those topics that fills shelves at bookstores and seats at conferences almost anywhere you go in the United States of America. It's a hot topic and everyone has their own viewpoint on how to lead or what an effective leader should be.

History tells us that the indispensable man of the 20th century was Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister of Great Britain throughout much of World War II.

It was Churchill who led the opposition to Adolf Hitler when the rest of the world, including the majority opinion of the political elite in his own country, thought the best response was appeasement and surrender.

Much of Churchill's leadership strength comes down to one word: **BELIEF**.

The fate of western civilization hinged on one man's belief in the evil of Nazism, the rightness of his own cause, and the ability of his nation to win despite long odds and catastrophic losses. His leadership was effective because he was able to communicate those same beliefs to others.

Check out this BBC documentary on what made Churchill such an effective leader.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FipWwE4ZjBU

What lessons of Churchill's leadership through belief translate to effective leadership in our church, homes, workplaces, and communities?

Christians don't have to look very far for an in-depth description of leadership. Indeed, the entire Bible can be viewed as God's plan for leadership. Many sermons, lectures, and books discuss biblical examples of leaders throughout the Scriptures. I personally recommend *Conviction to Lead by Albert Mohler* which explains the very principles we find in Titus.

Despite all of the focus on leadership in our culture, we have a tremendous deficit of leadership in most of our communities. The church has not been immune to this crisis. I attribute our nation's lack of leadership to several factors:

1. **Brokenness in families.** Young men and women are not taught to lead because they have not experienced leadership from their own parents.
2. **An obsession with celebrities.** We mistake leadership for the ability to generate ratings.
3. **Ineffective education** leading to biblical and historical illiteracy. Leaders by definition must be people who love to learn. Mohler states succinctly that "leaders are readers."

Character vs. Competence

- Do you agree that there is a lack of leadership in our communities?
- What do you think keeps people from leading? Is it fear, lack of competence or both?

Our sermon this week demonstrates that leadership in the local church MUST exemplify both competence and character. I would submit to you that the deficit in leadership is primarily a deficit in character.

Most people have the ability to learn competence through education, hard work, and dedication. The character to lead, however, can only be attained through the long-term work of the Holy Spirit in a life wholly submitted to God.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

- What does God say that we are?
- Are all Christians called to lead in some way?
- What are we called to lead the world to do? What is our mission?
- What are some ways to lead biblically that the world might not recognize as leadership?

Now read Titus 1:5-9.

- Which characteristics of an elder are related to competence and which are related to character?
- Are any of these characteristics irrelevant to others in the church? Why or why not?
- What kind of person do you want to follow?
- Do you agree or disagree with this statement: "all leadership in the church is relational?"